

Skilled Worker Shortage Recommendations

Connecting Young People to the World of Work

- Encourage the appropriate legislative committees to review our “model” core curriculum in Iowa school districts and to include 21st Century Skills, specifically employability skills.
- Encourage the appropriate legislative committees to develop any changes needed to align career and technical core areas for K-12 and post-secondary education institutions to specific industry skill priorities to enhance initiatives to address the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) pipeline.
- Increase graduation rates at all levels of education.
- Use teacher internships developed in collaboration and partnership with private industry and business to ensure that educators are up to speed on applied skills in the workplace.
- Increase the participation in AmeriCorps, Job Corps, Jobs for American Graduates program, intermediary networks, and civic involvement.
- Encourage partnerships with employers, school districts, and local governments and state agencies to prepare students for the workplace and create awareness of the types of rewarding careers available locally. These could include the following:
 - A. Implement a job shadowing and mentoring initiative with targeted industries with the opportunities for hands-on activities.
 - B. Encourage manufacturers to host field trips starting in middle school.
 - C. Develop an Iowa employer ambassador program that provides outreach services to parents and career counselors with information about future employment opportunities and the needed skills for those jobs.
 - D. Develop programs which allow youth to acquire on-the-job experience and “soft skills” needed to keep future jobs.
 - E. Connect career counselors with the employment opportunities of today’s workforce.
 - F. Target populations with barriers to employment to enhance their skills.

Training and Retraining Workers in Iowa

- Encourage local governments and state agencies to better promote and market Iowa’s current programs aimed at developing working adults’ skills and financial incentives available to employers.
- Encourage the appropriate legislative committees to find ways to eliminate the gap between traditional education grants and loan programs for the unique financial needs of Iowa’s adult workers and Iowa’s dislocated workers.

- Enhance initiatives and education opportunities to ensure that Iowa has more diversity and diverse talents in the workforce.
- Increase the capacity of community colleges to train and retrain the existing workforce by phasing in increases in the Workforce Training Fund (260C.18A).
- Encourage community colleges to create and expand capacity for short-term articulated certificate programs for our critical shortage areas, including using equipment and trainers provided through programs in the Workforce Training Fund.
- Encourage the appropriate legislative budget subcommittee to consider funding for future Workforce Needs Assessment Surveys (vacancy surveys).
- Expand the capacity for post-secondary educational institutions to respond to the critical skilled needs of Iowa's workforce.
- Increase awareness of and involvement in Iowa's apprenticeship programs.

Recruitment of Workers

- Market Iowa's high-tech job opportunities to targeted audiences.
- Use our post-secondary institutions, which include our community colleges, as a recruitment tool to bring in out-of-state students.
- Continue to enhance the capacity of Iowa communities to create a better quality of life for residents.
- Encourage our veterans to stay in Iowa and recruit veterans to Iowa by marketing Iowa's Military Service Homeownership Assistance program and veteran job opportunities.
- Promote regional marketing using collaboration of state and local resources.
- Encourage partnerships of loan forgiveness and grant programs to reduce the debt of Iowa's graduates whom remain and work in Iowa.
- Increase and enhance Iowa's housing capacity to aid in the recruitment of workers.
- Raise visibility, awareness, appreciation of, and opportunities for, mature workers in their communities. Review policies that create barriers for reemployment of mature workers.

These are important strategies for the General Assembly to review and prioritize in order to address Iowa's skilled worker shortage. These strategies need to be developed in collaboration with private business and industry. In addition, current workforce training and education programs should be reviewed for relevance and effectiveness to determine continuation, modification, or elimination.